

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-13 /099 W

----- 022277

R 171313Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6139

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 11010

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SCUL, MX, EG

SCYCT: INTERFAITH PEACE AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CONFERENCE

REF: (A) MEXICO 9746; (B) RABAT 4064; (C) TEL AVIV 5189

(NOTAL); (D) TUNIS 5338 (NOTAL); (E) ROME 12638

1. RABBI HERSHBERG AND HIS WIFE HAVE BEEN IN CAIRO SINCE
FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, IN CONNECTION WITH SUBJECT CONFERENCE.
HE HAS MET TWICE WITH AMBASSADOR.

2. THE RABBI HAD HOPED TO SEE SADAT, BUT THE PRESIDENT'S
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DEPARTURE FOR OMAN AND COLOMBO PRECLUDED SUCH A MEETING.

HE DID, HOWEVER, MEET WITH SAYED MAREI, SPEAKER OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, AND PRIMIN MAMDOUH SALEM, AS WELL AS WITH MIDDLE LEVEL EGYPTIAN MFA OFFICIALS. ACCORDING TO THE RABBI, ALL ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENDORSED THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN NOVEMBER IN MEXICO CITY. BOTH MAREI AND PRIMIN REPORTEDLY ASSURED THE RABBI THAT PRESIDENT ALSO STRONGLY FAVORS THE CONFERENCE AND THAT AN APPROPRIATE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION WILL BE SENT.

3. SINCE THE RABBI HAD BEEN IN DAMASCUS, WHERE HE WAS A GUEST OF THE GOVT AND WHERE THE SYRIANS APPARENTLY SPOKE TO HIM AT LENGTH ABOUT THEIR OBJECTIVES IN LEBANON, PRIMIN ALSO RAISED SUBJECT. PRIMIN SCOFFED AT SYRIAN CLAIM THAT THEIR PURPOSE IS TO RE-ESTABLISH PEACE IN LEBANON. WHEN TOLD OF SYRIAN STATEMENT TO THE RABBI THAT SYRIA WAS CARING FOR ONE MILLION LEBANESE REFUGEES, PRIMIN COUNTERED THERE WOULD BE NO REFUGEES IF SYRIANS HAD NOT WORKED TO DISRUPT LEBANON.

4. RABBI ALSO RECOUNTED TO AMBASSADOR MEXICAN PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S INTEREST IN HOSTING CONFERENCE AND HERSHBERG'S VISITS TO MOROCCO, TUNIS, ISRAEL, DAMASCUS, TEHRAN AND ROME. HE CLAIMS POPE PAUL DID AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN CONFERENCE, BUT THAT THIS HAS WORRIED SOME OF THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS SINCE THE POPE'S PRESENCE MIGHT OBSCURE OVER-ALL CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS. KING HASSAN, BOURGUIBA, AND THE SHAH, WHOM HE VISITED AT RAMSAR, HAD AGREED TO SEND DELEGATIONS. SO HAD THE ISRAELIS, ALTHOUGH THE RABBI ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GOI IS NOT ESPECIALLY KEEN ON THE IDEA. HE CLAIMS ALLON TOLD HIM EVERY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE THESE DAYS ENDS UP CONDEMNING ISRAEL AND WAS SKEPTICAL OF THE RABBI'S ASSURANCE THAT THIS COULD BE PREVENTED IN SUBJECT CONFERENCE. SYRIANS, TOO, HAD INDICATED READINESS SEND DELEGATION TO CONFERENCE.

5. ON A MORE PAROCHIAL LEVEL, THE RABBI SAYS HE DISCUSSED WITH PRIMIN HIS WILLINGNESS SEND A SEPHARDIC RABBI TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN EGYPT. HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH OTHER EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES WHEN LAST HERE YEAR AND HALF AGO. AT THE TIME GOE HAD AGREED, BUT CONFIDENTIAL

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THE RABBI SAYS JEWISH COMMUNITY HAS BEEN RELUCTANT TO MAKE FORMAL REQUEST. PRIMIN HAD ASSURED HIM JEWISH COMMUNITY IS WELCOME TO HAVE A RABBI OF ITS OWN AND ASKED HIM TO MAKE THIS CLEAR TO LEADERS OF THE COMMUNITY. RABBI HERSHBERG AND HIS WIFE, WHO HAD PLANNED TO LEAVE FOR AMMAN TODAY, ARE STAYING IN CAIRO ANOTHER DAY IN ORDER TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THE JEWISH COMMUNITY.
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